

/8 cont'd/

101 Kwangsi. why, after their migration to Hainan Island, did all the
171 local annals, and even they themselves, call them "Miao"? At
present, I am still unable to give a satisfactory answer. Perhaps,
the Miao and Yao of Kwangsi were originally of the same people but
had different names, or perhaps the present Yao of Kwangsi were
called Miao in former times. This question already involves all the
peoples of southwest China and even becomes an important problem
in the history of the Chinese people.

131 Now, let us discuss the geographical distribution of the Miao of
121 Hainan Island. The Annals of Kan-en District /see above/ states:
243 (The Miao people) never till the land in the plains but clear in the
mountains to make plots where they plant mountain rice.... "They
move once a year. When the land in the mountains recovers from
depletion, they move back again." At present the situation is still
166 the same (for details see Chapter 3 of this book). Because of this
kind of moving about, it is absolutely impossible for us to study their
fixed geographical distribution. As for the distribution of the Miao
recorded in the old local annals, in addition to what has already been
cited about Tan-chou and Kan-en, (the annals of Ch'iung-chou Fu,
Vol. 20, states that there was only one Miao village in Tan-chou,
called Ta-shan Miao which was under the jurisdiction of the Li-
tsung /magistrate/ of Lung-t'ou-t'ung), the Annals of Ch'iung-chou
Prefecture, (Vol. 20) states that there were five Miao villages in
Ch'iung-shan district under the jurisdiction of the /9/ chief of the
military settlement of T'ung-t'ung. The names of the five villages
were as follows:

The Upper Residence of the Miao of Chen-ling

The Lower Residence of the Miao of Chen-ling

The Residence of the Fan-fou Miao

The Upper Residence of the Shui-shang Miao

The Lower Residence of the Shui-shang Miao

131 Since the original reason why the Miao came was for the suppression
175 of the Li uprisings in Lo-huo, Pao-yü, and other t'ungs, and for
guarding the military post of Lo-an, Lo-an beyond doubt must have
been their first large encampment. Although they subsequently

/23 cont'd/

133 become especially skilled in hunting. At the same time, the
221 mountain slopes are very well suited to animal husbandry. Owing
to the lack of streams, however, fishing is rather negligible. In
general, agriculture—tilling the mountain slopes—remains the
[221] chief aspect of their economic life. Hunting is also very important
and, to a lesser extent, animal husbandry, while fishing is of no
importance. Their economic life is thus entirely conditioned by
geographic factors. We shall discuss this in the following sections.

2. Agriculture

244 There are two different methods of agriculture adopted by the
Miao, cultivating level fields and planting the mountain slopes.
As we have mentioned before, there is a good deal of mountainous
land and few level fields. Therefore, the planting of mountain
slopes is the chief /24/ form of agriculture while the cultivation of
level rice fields is only secondary.

The work of planting the mountain slopes usually begins in the
second month of the lunar year. First, they cut down the trees;
then they cease working for a short period to allow the branches to
be dried by the sun, after which they burn them; the ashes remain-
ing are a natural fertilizer. Subsequently, they sow the seed in
holes dug by spades and hoes. The main crop they cultivate is rice
grown on dry land. Corn and beans are also raised on a large scale.
[242] After the seeds are sown, they neither fertilize nor irrigate, and
only after the crops are grown is any weeding done. The eighth or
ninth month of the same year is usually the time of harvest.

● 243 Their method of cultivating their level rice fields is almost the
[171] same as that of the Chinese. Cultivation usually begins in early
spring. Their tools consist of ploughs and harrows which are drawn
[231] by oxen. Their method of sowing and transplanting the rice sprouts
is also the same as the Chinese. However, they pay little attention
to fertilizing, irrigation, and weeding. The wet rice fields can
be cultivated and harvested twice a year. The first period is from
the first month to the fifth month of the lunar year; the second
period from the sixth to the ninth month. With dry fields there is

/24 cont'd/

- 243 only the second period. If the dry fields are not planted with miscellaneous crops during the first period, they are simply left fallow. But in actuality, even in the Li area, wet rice fields which can be cultivated twice a year, are very few, and those which are held by the Miao are even rarer.

The Miao still do not know the use of the sickle for reaping in harvesting. They gather the stalks by hand, tie them together in sheaves, and then put them into a ho-ts'ang /drying bin/ to be dried by exposure to the wind or by the sun. The rectangular drying bin is built of bamboo with thatch on top and all four sides left open. The floor is made of long planks on which the grain is spread. After it has been thoroughly dried, the grain is moved to a granary, which is also rectangular, is built of wooden boards covered with thatch, and has a raised floor. It is all shut up except for a door on the front side. The grain is neatly stored in the granary and is not taken out until it is needed. The milling process consists of placing the grain into a rectangular wooden mortar in which the grain is pounded with a wooden pestle to remove the husks. /25/ Then the grain is once more put into a wooden mortar to be hulled into rice. The rice mortar is circular just like that used by the Li.

- 311 The everyday food of the Miao comes almost entirely from till-
 247 ing the mountain slopes. Only a very few comparatively wealthy Miao own flat rice fields. Since each piece of hilly land cannot be used continuously for more than two or three years before the soil becomes depleted, it is necessary to stop planting it. For instance, a mountain area planted in this way may be quite large, but it is not difficult to have the total area completely tilled by rotation
 [34] within eight to ten years, and the soil of the whole area must be allowed to recover. At this time then the Miao must seek fresh
 166 land in other localities. Therefore, the Miao frequently move once every few years, or at least once in a decade; thus their life is as unsettled as a drifting ship. I have observed this situation with my own eyes during the period of my study.

- 244 They cultivate very few vegetables, but sugar cane and bananas
 245 may be seen occasionally.

/139/

000 At Ta-ch'i we opened our box of medicines at Mr. Wang's house, but could not find any drug for dysentery. Mr. Wang's workmen
278 told us about a herb, used frequently by the Miao and said to be a kind of miracle drug to cure dysentery for the Miao. I suggested to Yüan-chiung that he should try it, as it might not do him any harm. He instantly resisted the idea and said he preferred death to taking the Miao drug. As we were put in such a predicament, with no medical facilities of any kind around this place, a thought suddenly struck me. As a child I had seen countrymen in my native place mix honey with tea to cure dysentery. Mr. Wang happened to have honey in his house, and we had brought along several kinds of tea with us. I mixed some and let Yüan-chiung drink it. Its effect is yet to be seen.

000 When we were at Ang-chi, though it was a filthy place, I was able to amuse myself by talking with the Miao. Back at Mr. Wang's house, it was like living in a castle; the place was much more comfortable, but I felt overcome with loneliness.

Third month, sixth day. (Saturday)

Originally I had thought that we should start for Pao-t'ing today, if Yüan-chiung was not any better. But after taking the drink of
278 honey in tea that I gave him yesterday, he has felt an immediate
164 effect. His dysentery has become much less frequent, and his spirits are much higher. As a complete cure seems in sight, we are glad to be able to cancel our previous plans.

After breakfast at ten o'clock, we set out for Wen-hua trading center, intending to take a closer look at the trading conditions of
226 the Miao and Li. At Wen-hua ten or more boys were making fish bombs, which they threw into the river to explode among the fish. We bought some 20 firecrackers for ourselves and asked the children to make a fish bomb for us. With it we caught about half a catty of fish, and we brought them back for supper.

●243 The Li in the neighborhood were busy sowing and planting rice, and during the day we walked about the fields and talked with them.

/54 cont./

241 agriculture. After our investigation on the spot we realized
 [114] that this account was all wrong. What is said in the Gazetteer
 [133] refers only to one of the methods used by the Miao to cultivate
 [243] mountainous terrain. The Miao area is all mountainous, hence
 there is much hilly land and few fields. The usual crops are
 various cereals, mainly planted on mountain slopes. The
 inclined field cannot take fertilizers. After three or four years
 of cultivation, the soil becomes barren. It becomes necessary
 to use the rotation method, to abandon it and pick new land
 to develop. This allows the old barren ground to recover its
 fertility. After three or four years a lush undergrowth gives it
 the appearance of wild land, which to the Miao indicates the
 recovery of the land's fertility. When spring comes the Miao
 fell the trees and brush, let them dry in the field, and then
 set fire to them. The charred remains and ash are left in the
 field to be used as fertilizer. This is the so-called slash and
 burn cultivation, otherwise known as to-yü / "to slash fields
 which are in the third year of cultivation/, and the field is
 called a field planted by fire or yü field. In the first year of
 cultivation the yield is often doubled. The mixed cereals
 [243] planted includes grain for the most part, maize, /55/ buck-
 wheat, and kaoliang; still next hemp, beans, and pearl barley.
 [22] The sowing is generally done in April and May, and the har-
 vesting in August and September.

243 Besides the yü fields the Miao also plant plots of land
 [22] which can be flooded for growing rice. Rice grown in flooded
 fields is transplanted in April and May and is harvested in
 August and September. The Miao area is very mountainous
 and there are very few level areas for rice fields. They are
 found in small number only in the small basins in the moun-
 tains and along the banks of streams and rivers (Illus. 27), the
 rest being terraced fields (Illus. 28, 29). The land of the
 [312] basins in the mountains are mainly irrigated by leading water
 from springs fed by mountain streams. Water wheels (Illus. 30)
 are used for irrigation in the terraced fields along the streams. (1)

/55 cont. /

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[171]

1. This kind of water wheel is propelled completely by water power. In the mountainous areas of Hunan and Kweichow where the water flows rapidly, such utilization of natural water power is very widespread. It is not found only in Miao areas. Sung Ying-hsing of the Ming period wrote in his Tien Kung Kai Wu: "The rapid water flowing underneath the wheel makes it rotate, forcing the water into tubes, one by one leading into another bamboo tube and flowing into the field. It never stops day or night; there is no worry for a hundred fields (see Vol. I, 'Nai Li /Grains/')." A kind of water mill (Illus. 31) used in the Miao area also utilizes natural water power.

The size of the water wheel depends upon the height of the terraced fields. By means of long and short bamboo tubes the water is conducted to near and distant fields. The terraced fields in the Miao area involve considerable labor. On a slope

[332] where there is a spring, earth is scooped out to make raised
[333] paths between fields, which act as dikes, going up in tiers,
or stones are piled up to make embankments on both banks of a stream. These man-made terraced fields require a great deal of time and labor and are susceptible to drought. For they rise from the foot to the waist of the mountain, tier by tier, like a ladder, so that it is very easy for the water in the fields to leak away. But in the event of a shortage of rainfall, when the spring fed by mountain streams dries up, irrigation stops

[731]
[784]

/55 cont./

243 and a drought, ensues, an event which is greatly feared by
312 the Miao. Every second and third month plowing ceases for
731 seven days, and harrowing is avoided in order to ward off a
784 drought. The period of taboo starts from the nineteenth day
of the second month to the twenty-third day, and again, from
the thirtieth day of the third month to the first and second day
of the fourth month. According to Miao superstition any vio-
[782] lation during the period of taboo would bring on the disaster of
[688] a drought. Only through prayer and repentance can it be
avoided. The violators are required to provide chickens and
pigs for the sorcerer who stands at the highest point of the slope
to offer prayer and sacrifice (called the "sacrifice to the spirit
of the high slope," see the later chapter, "Magic and Religion").
243 When terraced fields come up against floods, although it is
731 not like the lack of harvesting of seeds in a drought, still often
the sudden rush of mountain streams bursts through the terraced
fields and destroys the structure of the fields. Moreover stones
and sand often pile up, which is difficult to repair at once.
Sometimes, the field is reduced to a steep incline or a deep
gulch beyond repair. So, the Miao people toil all year round:
731 in prosperous years they barely miss cold and starvation. In
648 case of disaster, they are unable to look after themselves: the
[432] weak sell their children in exchange for a measure of grain;
[858] the strong form gangs to plunder the countryside. When the
[579] authorities press too hard on these marauders, then widespread
unrest often result. Thus goes the saying: "The Miao area has
a small disturbance every five years, and a large disturbance
every ten years." The reason is not that the Miao are by nature
fond of trouble making, but that they are driven to take
dangerous risks by the pressure of poverty/Illus. 27-31 appear
[161] on pp. 56-60./ /61/ under a condition of overpopulation in
a limited area. Hitherto, each suppression of a Miao disturbance
by the government brought about peace, but it lasted only a
few years before the outbreak of new unrest. Former adminis-
trators did not understand that the cause of the Miao disturbances

[text continues on p.89]

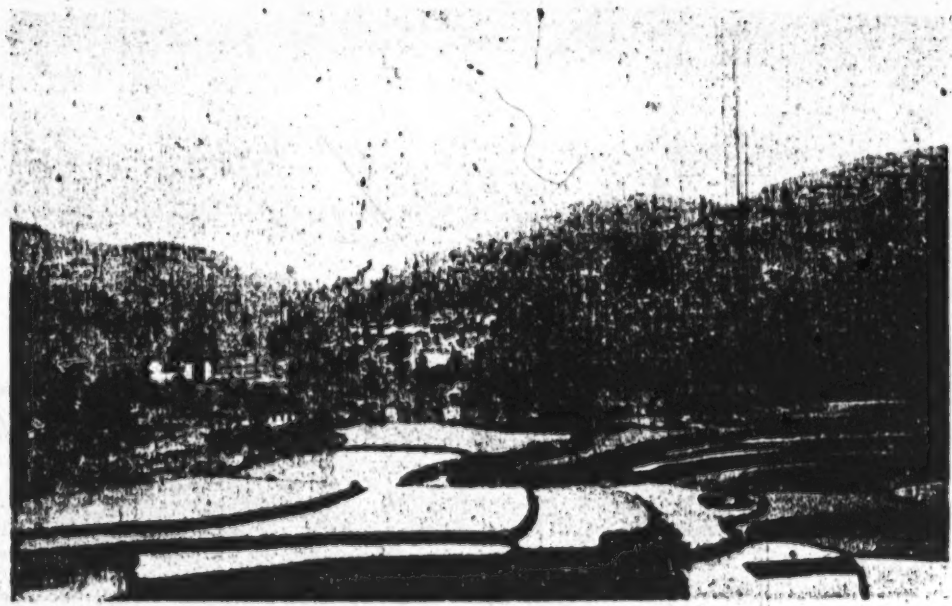
2:ling & Ruey--84

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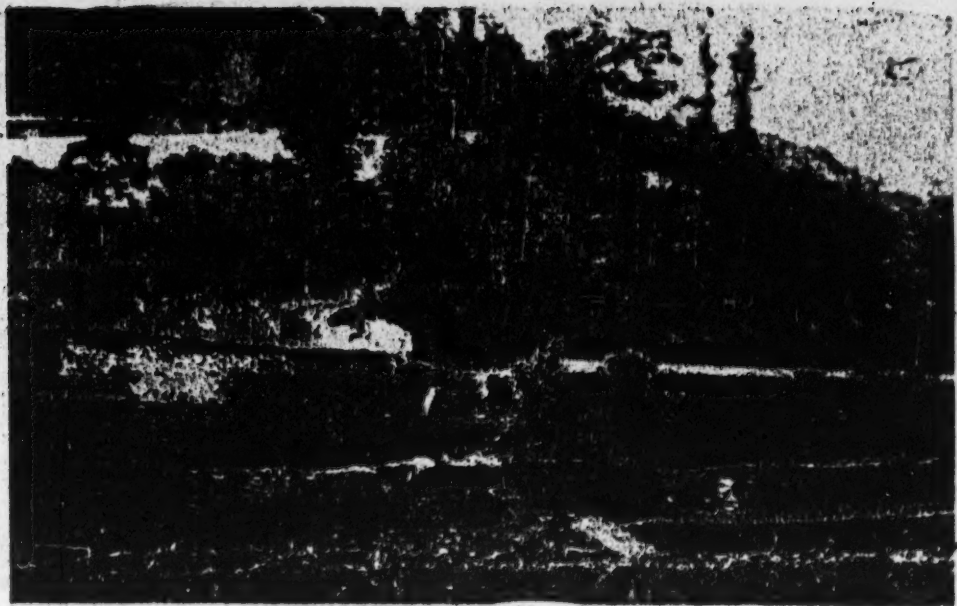
Illus. 27. Wet rice fields in Ya-pao-chai, Feng-huang.

2:ling & Ruey--85

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/57/



Illus. 28. Terraced fields near Lao-tung-chai, Feng-huang.

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Illus. 29. Terraced fields near Ta-lung-tung,
Yung-sui.

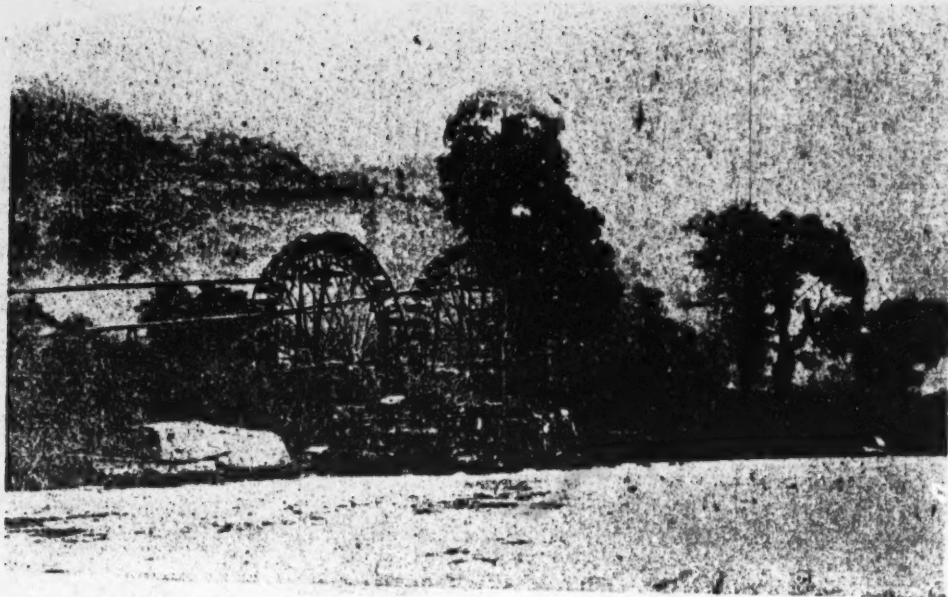
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2:ling & Ruey--87

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Illus. 30. Water wheel on bank of the T'o Chiang.

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2: Ling & Ruey--88

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(1933) 1947

AE5 Miao AE5

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Illus. 31. Water mill on bank of the T'ung Ho.

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/61 cont. /

245 year and then transplanted, or the seeds are planted directly.

The trees are planted from seven to eight ch'ih apart; if they are too close it is injurious to their growth. Although both spring and winter are suitable for planting the tung tree, winter is preferred. The newly reclaimed mountain land

243 still can be also planted with mixed cereals before the tung
245 trees have grown to any great height, for the tung-tree planted the previous winter already has sprouts aboveground in the

spring, and at weeding time injury to the tung reeds in the ground can be avoided. After two or three years the tung grove cannot be used to grow any more mixed cereals, and has to be weeded constantly in order to facilitate their growth.

245 Otherwise they are liable to die. After four years the trees gradually begin to produce seeds, increasing year by year; and after six or seven years all of them are producing. They blossom in the third month of the year, and harvesting is done in the eighth or ninth month, after the "Cold Dew /a solar

[205] term from October 8-22/." At harvest time the Miao go in groups up the mountain to pick the tung seeds. Men balance
[412] bamboo baskets on their shoulders, and the women carry them on their backs. /Illustrations 32-35 on pp. 62-65/ /66/ If the tree is high they hit the branches with long bamboo poles to make the seeds fall down and then pick them up. If the

[242] tree is short, they use iron hooks to get them. When the baskets are full they put them into baskets and carry them home. They put the seeds under the eaves or any damp place to enable them to absorb moisture. After a month or two the
[258] outside of the seeds become black, and then they flay the
[439] seeds, which are sold for the extraction of oil. The hulls are
[252] burned into ashes, which can be used in place of soda.

The planting of the tea plant is comparatively easier than that of the tung tree, except that while the tea plant is still a seedling it is necessary to stick pine branches on the sides to shade it from the sun. Otherwise the seedlings are liable to be killed by the sun. Or one can delay the weeding of the field for six or seven months so that the various weeds can

[text continues on p.95]

/155 cont./

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life are now all cast away. The sins cannot be cast away in the house, or left to your sons and grandsons, or to the village. All your enmities in the world are also cast away! Guard the host in peace and without troubles."

On finishing the foregoing part of the incantation, the helpers immediately burn the paper money, and the sorcerer-priest continues:

"Wine, meat, and rice have all been offered to you to consume, paper money has been burned; and we ask you to take and use them! Everything is over; now please turn around and go back."

After this the sorcerer-priest and the host eat the meat and drink the wine together.

(13) The Kuei of the Five Grains

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Whenever the harvest of the five grains is not abundant, or the six kinds of domestic animals do not increase, the Miao will sacrifice to the kuei of the five grains, in Miao called [liɔŋ noŋɿ]. The kuei invoked are called [mp'ɔŋ noŋɿ kuenɿ miɿ] and [piɿ noŋɿ kuenɿ noŋɿ]. The time of the sacrifice is in broad daylight at any time, and the place is in the right corner inside the main house. A table is set up, and on it are spread five bowls each of wine, meat, and cooked rice, arranged in three rows. The wax is also on the table, and the bamboo /156/ tube is placed behind the table. The Miao sorcerer beats the bamboo tube with the right hand and utters an incantation as follows:

"The host's last year's harvest was not abundant; the five grains formed ears, but produced no grain. Further, they were eaten by locusts. The old year has gone by, the new year has arrived. Now that we have come to the first and second month, an auspicious day has been selected to sacrifice to the kuei. I have been asked to come here, so I

/156 cont. /

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have come with soldiers and horses, and have prepared the wax and the bamboo tube, and have spread out wine, meat, and rice as well as the paper money, and request the kuei to come to receive them."

[788] At this point the sorcerer-priest stands up, picks up the bell and the chiao, and then resumes his seat, ringing the bell with his left hand, holding the chiao in his right hand, and continuing the incantation:

"Now we come to sacrifice to the kuei of the five grains with good wine, good meat, and cooked large-grain rice, and a lot of paper money, and ask the kuei to receive them. Protect the five grains so that there is an abundant harvest! When the weather gets warm, when the hundred flowers blossom, and when the birds begin to sing, when we sow the five grains, may the sprouting grain be green and luxuriant, and by the fifth and sixth month may they form ears, without being eaten by locusts. May the harvest of the five grains in the ninth and the tenth month be abundant. We ask the kuei to finish up the wine and meat, gather the paper money, and go back. Protect the five grains so that there is an abundant harvest, and the six kinds of domestic animals increase!"

[787] While he is uttering the incantation, at the same time he divines with the chiao, first for the five grains, then for the six domestic animals. The yang chiao and the sheng chiao are auspicious. The yin chiao is a bad omen. After the divination is over, paper is burned to send off the kuei.

*782 Again, when a Miao woman has given birth or someone has a stomach-ache, they also sacrifice to the kuei of the five grains. The kuei invoked and the layout for the ritual are the same as above. The text of the incantation then requests the kuei of the five grains to protect the baby or to cause the person's stomach-ache to stop.

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[179] the Miao, but its origin cannot be traced.

At the sacrifice a low square table is set up in a vacant area outside the main entrance, and on it are placed three bowls each of wine and meat. Each bowl of meat has a pair of chopsticks on it. Also a bowl of water with salt and pepper /la-tzu/ in it. Still another bowl has a small quantity of uncooked rice, as horse fodder. Three packs of paper money are piled up one on the other, with three sticks of incense stuck in among the paper money. Before the table is a low chair, on which is a handkerchief.

[787] /164/ The sorcerer-priest wearing everyday clothes and holding a pair of chiao-tzu in his right hand, utters incantation. First he recites the invocation, after which he scatters some rice around. Each time he makes an incantation, some rice is scattered. After repeating this act three times, he starts divination with the chiao-tzu to find out whether the shen has arrived. If he gets the sheng chiao, then the shen has already descended. Then he starts an incantation to urge the spirit to drink wine. Then he states the reason for the invocation, and prays seeking the protection of the shen. After this he utters the incantation to send off the shen three times, each time scattering rice. At the same time the bystanders burn the paper.

(5) The Kung-an Shen

[777] The Kung-an shen, also known as the Shen of the five
[751] wisdoms, gives protection against many things: such as pustules
[231] and ulcers, flood and fire, the six domestic animals not in-
[243] creasing, and the five grains not being fruitful. For all these
[731] they may sacrifice to this shen. But there are many grades of
sacrifice to this shen, the first grade, the third grade, the fifth
grade, the seventh grade, the ninth grade, and the twelfth
grade, which must be performed in rotation. For instance, when
a family offers sacrifice the first time, they offer the first-grade
sacrifice, and if after three or five years it offers a sacrifice, it

805 The girls sat about two or three fires between
 776 the group of grave mounds and a bamboo
 527 thicket near the bullfight meadow, while they
 541 embroidered and entertained young men from
 other Cowrie Shell Miao villages in very lively
 fashion, teasing one another, snatching tur-
 bans and ornaments, and chasing. Some of
 them played bamboo flutes of their own manu-
 facture and sang. About a third fire sat an-
 other group of women and their little ones.
 A group of young people and a few among
 the others went to the second or third market
 after the New Year, but the young folk went
 only for fun. Groups also went to other vil-
 lages, nicely dressed and bearing gifts of wine
 and cured pork, and returned after two or
 three days. For a death which occurred dur-
 [764] ing this season there was a longer period of
 feasting by day and dancing to the *lu sheng*
 (fig. 18, a, b)* and drum during the night.
 On the fifteenth of the first month some
 daughters returned to share the family feast.
 At the beginning of the second month the
 Cowrie Shell Miao community in Teh-hua
 lien pao in Kuei-ting Hsien had a bullfight, to
 which as many as possible of the older men
 and the young people of both sexes went.

805 As soon as the first month was over (the
 241 middle of March, 1942) and signs of spring
 243 appeared the women went to the mountains
 to lay in an extra supply of fuel in the form
 of firewood, with which they filled all the
 available space in the lofts. The chief occu-
 pation of the men at this time was the plow-
 ing and harrowing of fields. The draft ani-
 mals used were cows and water buffalo of
 either sex. First the fields which were to
 serve as seed beds were plowed, harrowed,
 flooded, plowed, and harrowed again.
 Women also continued to work in vegetable
 gardens and fields. There were periods of
 warm, sunny days broken by severe thunder
 showers when it became unseasonably hot.

When the seed beds were ready men cast
 seed into them from the dikes (fig. 16, a).
 Then a branch or a line of branches, usually
 of bamboo or pine, were stuck in the fields to
 show that they were planted to rice. These
 seed beds were sometimes wide and long and

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very widely scattered near to and far from the village, so that when the plants were ready for transplanting they need not be carried so far to the permanent fields.

This plowing, harrowing, fertilizing, and seeding of fields to rice (figs. 15, b; 16, a) continued for more than a month. During that time the young people, both married and single, began the cleaning out of stables and carrying the straw and manure to fields into which the rice was later transplanted. I am not sure whether they were expected to initiate certain activities, or were just more enterprising, but the family in which I lived had their stables cleaned first. Perhaps it was because as the most scholarly of the village the men of this family could interpret the *Farmers' Almanac*. The work went on all day and there was much merriment connected with it. Some of the young men filled the baskets while the girls sat about and embroidered and joked with them. Even after they had carried their baskets (one on each end of a carrying pole) to a central point, they continued to embroider until Mo-mei gave a signal, whereupon they set off in a long file. First one, then a second, and then a third group of fields was visited, in different directions from the village but all belonging to the one family, whose holdings were comparatively extensive. At night the women of the household served a good meal to the whole company, for which they had made fresh bean curd.

On several days following this work continued and the stables of other households were cleaned. When it was a question of the household in which I lived, Mo-mei, the oldest daughter, set the pace, but she did not always make one of the group on other days. Rice in the seed beds was now well up above the water, making the fields look like lovely green lawns. One day I went with two of the women of our household to a field where they took out weeds, dug around plants of celery cabbage, beans and leeks, and cast in pulse. On another day the old mother put in the seed of chillies, using wood ashes as a top dressing.

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During the third month (the second half of April and the first half of May, 1942) there was much rain, very welcome to the farmers because it insured the right amount of water

[30a]

the bucket (regularly used for carrying water) 241
down into the pond, up and over the bank
(fig. 15, e). They got into a very nice rhythm.
I had seen the second nephew turning a bean
mill once, but aside from this that was the
only real work I had seen either of these men
do. The nephew seemed to be ashamed of it,
too, for he stopped abruptly when he thought
I was going to take his picture. However,
evidently today everyone had to work. A
younger boy was fishing and the other chil-
dren playing nearby, so that it was quite a
family party.

By the beginning of the fourth month 243
(May 15, 1942) rice plants were ready for 574
transplanting. Fields nearly to Lung-li, which
is at a lower altitude, had already had plants
set out in them (fig. 15, d). On the fourth of
the month of the year I lived with them
(May 18, 1942) our household again was
first. They made quite an occasion of setting
out the plants in a large square field, beyond
the low hills and right beside a good-sized
Chung-chia village. Very early the women
of the family, with the exception of the old
men's two wives, together with the women
and girls of other households, bundled to-
gether the rice plants from one of the seed
beds and piled them into their carrying bas-
kets (fig. 16, e) — the same ones which had
been used earlier to carry straw and manure.
Two men were plowing and two harrowing
in the flooded field when the long line of
women approached and began tossing the
bundles into the field. Before the plowing
and harrowing were entirely finished the set-
ting out of plants had begun. With Mo-mei
setting the pace, each woman took a strip
the width of the field, then turned and worked
the length of it. They went home for a long
lunch period about two o'clock. Afterward
not all of them returned, but the work was
finished well before dark. The usual good
meal, featuring bean curd, was served. The
family nonchalantly appropriated my bowls
and chopsticks to use with theirs.

They were now in the midst of the busiest 241
season of the year, for the harvest of wheat
and its accompanying crops of broad beans,
rape, and peas came just when the rice was
ready for transplanting. One day I helped a
widow (the chief shamaness of the village)

312 alling up rice plants and carrying them to the
241 fields, but no men setting out plants.
243

I once tried my hand at helping and did fairly well at the bundling of rice plants — at least as well as the twelve year old girl — but they feared I would be too slow and clumsy at the transplanting. It was a nice little trick to gather up the plants in the right hand and feed them into the left, then swish them around in the water to get all the mud off the roots. Usually two handfuls were so prepared and laid down in the water while another was gathered. Then they were all put together, washed again, and tied with a length of straw, of which the worker had a bundle stuck into the back of her belt or laid on the stand of plants before her. The mud was more than knee deep and I found myself clumsy in moving around and getting one leg after the other out of the mud without losing my balance. The setting out of the plants required the ability to move backward in a lively fashion. That night they inquired solicitously after my waistline, fore and aft, but all I could report was a very bad sunburn just above the water line. Also I had got rather wet, for their sailor pants, rolled well up the thigh, were much better suited to that sort of thing than my knickers. I found that they were all having dysentery, and I got a touch of it, too.

[164]

374 Foresight in gathering big bundles of fag-gots justified itself during this period, for no one had time to go to the mountains for fuel. They used at least one big bundle a day in our family for the fires under the big cooking bowl in the kitchen and under the little ones in the house, over which they cooked vegetables.

241
243
312

By the end of the first week of the fifth month (end of June) the transplanting of rice was complete. Then there was a season of cultivation, until the plants were large enough to shade the space between them. Women, and now and then a man, worked in family groups in each paddy, pulling out the weeds and tossing them on the dikes or treading them down into the mud. At the same time they had to cultivate vegetable gardens and the fields in which beans, corn, tobacco, chilies, and miller had been sown to take the place of wheat and other crops. Here they

[326]

used the mattock, and as they worked they fertilized the plants with night soil and wood ashes mixed with animal manure. Our family also used some lime mixed with manure, which was left over from several loads carried to another village eighteen li² away. Toward the end of the fifth month several young men had taken out the pile in the room back of the kitchen in the new house and mixed it with manure, after which some of the village girls and women of our household carried it. It must have been promised for a certain day, for the trip was made in a drenching rain which made the road hard to travel. Mo-mei, the oldest daughter, was a member of this group.

It was interesting to note the attitude toward the transplanting of rice in different localities and among different people in one locality. In Yunnan among the Chinese near Kunming men bundled up the plants and transported them, while only women were allowed to set them out. I was told that this was a custom borrowed from the non-Chinese there, who believed that the women insured fertility. Here the women did all of it, with only a few men helping with either bundling or setting out. In both cases the men did the plowing and most of the harrowing. In the one Chinese family in this village and those between the valley and Lung-li I saw only men doing all of it.

While the busy season was in progress all the bundles of faggots in the lofts got used up, so now and then the women went to get more. Often it was much mixed with dried grass, fern, and so on, sometimes mostly of these. Also huge bundles of long, fresh grass for the animals, which were kept in the stables, were brought in. Women and children took water buffalo out once or twice a day for a soaking in the large pond and for feeding upon the rushes and reeds in it. But cultivation was the main task for all women, who took time out only to nurse a boil or catch up on washing and mending. The men went to market a great deal, most of them carrying wood in one form or another — planks, pieces of log, split firewood, faggots, bamboo poles. They seemed able, with what they could find

to sell from time to time, just to get through nicely until rice harvest, for the one of the year before had been poor. One day a large bundle of mallow was brought in and the fiber stripped off to use in bundling up bunches of grass. These fibers are tough and strong and used a great deal in place of rope. 241 [283]

It was after the middle of the seventh month (end of August) that I returned from a trip to Kweiyang, and just about two weeks before the rice harvest. During these weeks the chief occupation of both men and women was again the bringing in of fuel—grass, fern, weeds, and green bushes. They piled the lofts full of them. All of these made a hot fire but much smoke, and burned quickly. 374

Rice harvest began about the first of the eighth month (middle of September) and was the chief occupation of both men and women, with few exceptions. The women did most of the cutting of the plants, taking bunch after bunch in the left hand and cutting the stalks as near the ground as possible with the sharp sickle in the right. Sometimes the roots were exposed and had to be avoided. They could take as many as eight or nine in this way at one time, and lay them in rows for the beaters to take up. One or more large, square wooden boxes were set up in the field and men and women took up the bundles and beat the grain out into the box. These boxes were pushed about the field on wooden runners (the so-called summer-sled) as the cut grain in one section was beaten out and the women had gone to make it ready in another part of the field. If the field were a large one, as many as twenty would be cutting together; for the smallest two could take care of the cutting. One or more took up the bundles from which the grain had been beaten out and, making them into stacks, set them up about the field. They had a very neat and quick way of tying them. One or more filled baskets from the grain in the boxes and carried them two at a time by means of the carrying pole to the houses or to mats on the threshing floors. Some sheaves were also carried in and stored in the houses or hung up on the rafters. Twice during the day, toward the end of the morning and afternoon periods 243 512 •

about 1400 feet (.5 mile).

[336]

243 of work, they all stopped and rested. Some
512 lay down and slept on the ground; some
older women laid stacks down on the ground
and sat on them to talk and smoke; the
younger women and girls got out their em-
broidery and worked on it. For about two
hours at noon they went home to eat their
lunch.

243 Women and children were also busy at
252 home spreading out the grain on the mats,
sweeping out bits of stalk, and so on, spread-
ing it again so that it could all get the sun,
carrying it in again at night in the baskets,
and rolling up and stacking the mats. Some
of it was bought by dealers who made a
price on uncut grain, some carried to market
and sold there. There were two kinds of
rice — *ta mi*⁴ and *lo mi*⁵. In some cases a
row or two of *lo mi* was planted on the edge
of fields of other rice; in some cases the whole
field was of it only. It brought a better price
than the other and was used for the New Year
cakes, at the festival of Tuan Yang, for the
colored balls at Hsiao Mang, and for several
other festivals. A fine dish of fat pork slices
rolled in parched *lo mi* was often served at
special meals.

243 When *lo mi* was planted in a field with
other rice it was not cut with it, but later the
stalks were carefully cut with a small knife
blade set into one side of a wooden holder,
and the sheaves were brought in and stored
first in the hall below and then in the loft.
Early in the morning we would form a sort
of relay team, of which the old lady in the
hall below saw to it that they were tied se-
curely, several children and I carried them
up the ladder, one boy stood on a bench and
received them as they were handed up, then
tossed them onto the platform above the main
hall, whose ceiling is higher than that of the
side rooms, and a woman stacked the sheaves
there. At one time the main hall, a half *chien*
room adjoining, and one *chien* of the loft
were full of grain beaten out and waiting to
be sunned dry. In time this all got sunned,
sent to market, or stored in a granary or an-
other part of the loft.

⁴ Ordinary rice.

⁵ Glutinous variety, white or black.

24/ Sometimes a day was taken to bring in more
 23/ fuel, or grass for the animals. The water
 245 buffalo were taken out night and morning
 for a mud or water bath, and ponies were al-
 lowed to graze in the meadow, with a small
 boy to guard them. One day we cut in a field
 into which they had strayed and in which
 they had beaten down the plants. Another oc-
 cupation at this time was the gathering of
 chestnuts and English walnuts. The custom
 of tree ownership was in evidence here. One
 day we gathered from a tree right back of
 the Huang family temple. One man got up
 into the tree and beat the branches. Others,
 including the children, gathered up the burrs
 and nuts. There was a good harvest. The
 children had fairly good-sized baskets full,
 from which they later ate as they wished.
 There were also several loads of nuts in the
 burrs, which sold in market for six dollars a
sheng.^{*} Later we gathered from a tree in the
 wood. Here the tree was not only shaken,
 but branches were cut off and thrown down,
 with the burrs on them. A smaller variety,
 which grew wild on the low bushes on the
 mountains, was also plentiful.

243 The last half of the eighth month was rather
 rainy (after September 20th), with hot, sunny
 days between hard rains. Fortunately most of
 the rice had been harvested, but there still re-
 mained some of the ordinary rice and *lo mi*
 which had been left in the fields. This was
 not beaten out there, but brought in in
 sheaves, having been cut with the knife blade,
 not the scythe. *Lo mi* (glutinous rice) straw
 was used for the making of rice straw sandals,
 while the other was used for thatch and many
 other purposes. That not used at once was
 stacked up around the trees in the wood, a
 very pretty sight. The rain did not keep
 people from markets, for grain, chillies, and
 other seasonable produce had to be sold. The
 chief other crops at this season were soy and
 red beans, tobacco, millet, and a wild plant
 they called *ying tau*. All of these had to be
 sunned on the mats, in bundles, or festooned
 across the front of the houses. Some of the
 beans and some of the rice from sheaves were

^{*}One-tenth of a *tau* (see note 7, p. 33), or 31.6
 cubic inches.

flailed out. The first *lo mi* cakes of the season were made, stuffed with boiled beans and herbs. Bean curd was also made.

While the harvest was still incomplete they began the plowing, fertilizing, and harrowing of fields for the planting of winter crops of wheat, beans, peas, and rape. The same cleaning of stables took place, with the young people working in groups as in the spring and enjoying a special meal with bean curd as the chief dish at night. By the end of the ninth month the supply of fuel, which at one time filled the equivalent of a *chien* and a half in our house, was mostly used up. Again it was necessary to go out for more.

The weather during the tenth month (November) was very wet. Rainy days, or gray, misty ones, far outnumbered the even partially sunny ones. Consequently, the days were even shorter than the season of the year would naturally make them. Breakfast came between nine and ten o'clock by my watch. Then the cattle and water buffalo were taken out to graze by the children, women went for firewood, carrying a lunch with them, and returned just before dark for the evening meal and a little visiting before going to bed. They also tended vegetable gardens or sowed seed in the fields. The plowing, seeding, and carrying of fertilizer continued even after some fields had plants already well up. A few days were fine enough for sunning grain.

One of those days was the twenty-third of the tenth month (November 30). That evening and the next morning mats were laid on the threshing floor and the wooden machine for cleaning grain was brought out. Eight men with bags and baskets carried grain to a dealer in Lung-li on the twenty-fourth and sixteen men on the twenty-fifth of the tenth month. Each man carried four of the "small row" used in this district. This was for our one family. Before they went they had breakfast. Each man carried a large *lo mi* cake stuffed with beans for lunch, and they had a bean curd supper upon their return.

Even before the end of the rice harvest and the seeding of fields to winter crops, the festivities of the least busy season of the

* These weigh twenty-four catty (1 pound), or 32 pounds.

Monday E-8 (1988-1989) and 1988
Pioneer Museum Park

213



[88a]

[For captions, see p. 88b.--Analyst]

243

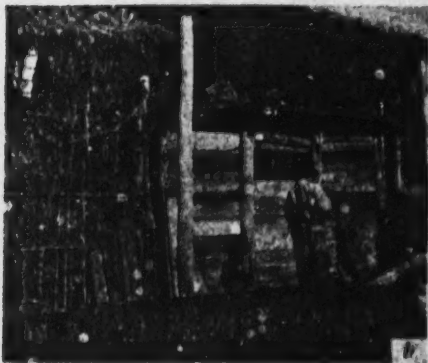


a, Family and friends setting out the rice plants. b, Man plowing, wife spreading night soil. c, Women setting out rice plants. d, Girls bundling plants in the field. e, Women bringing up water with bucket from the pond.

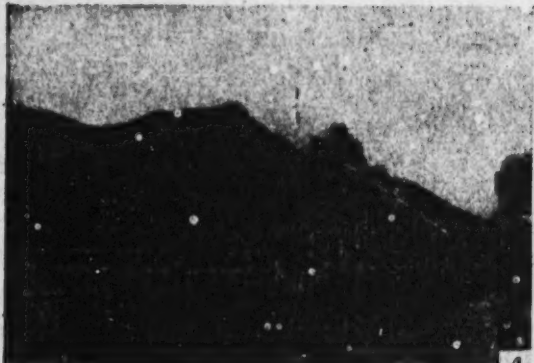
[88b]

243
CANCERY E-5 (1940-7) 1947 AES MISO AES

VOL. XXXII, No. 1, FIGURE 16



PEABODY MUSEUM PAPERS



[For captions, see p. 89b. -- Analyst]

[89a]

[89b]



a, Man on the dike casting rice into the flooded seed beds. b, Woman hulling rice, showing rice-hulling machine. c, Woman cleaning rice (background), person behind pouring rice from basket into hopper, and in foreground a person pouring rice on a mat. d, Woman flailing grain on a threshing floor. e, People going through the village bearing rice plants from the seed beds to permanent fields. f, Preparing paddy for market by filling baskets and bags, showing grain-cleaning machine, baskets, and mats.

243

[5 cont.]

181 However, due to repeated instances of swindling and oppression by
609 the Chinese, they are always on their guard and suspicious of every good motive. This discord among the racial groups is entirely the fault of the Chinese, and efforts must be made to eliminate it. Whenever I arrived at a Miao-I village I often found at first wariness and restraint on their part. I understood the cause of such psychology and persisted in dealing with them in good faith. After we came to know each other better, their fear soon gave way to warmth and friendliness, which still lingered on at the time of parting. The Miao-I district I have seen is actually a garden of harmony and happiness. It is hoped that those sympathetic to the Miao-I would continue to visit their areas to influence and help them so as to raise their standard of living to the level of the other people in China.

3. Livelihood

- 262 1) Food. The staple food of the Miao and I consists of rice, corn, buckwheat, potato and huang-li [coarse rice?], varying according to localities. The mountain terrain in the northwest produces corn, buckwheat, potato and huang-li, and so the principal food of the Miao-I people there is corn, which is eaten all year round, white potato, buckwheat and the rest are eaten only occasionally. In the southeast there are more
- [243] irrigated fields in which rice is produced. The very poor people would eat corn, buckwheat and potato, while the others have both ordinary rice and glutinous rice for food, especially the latter, which is known colloquially as "the Miao glutinous rice."
- [482] Often one sees a Miao or I traveling with a bamboo basket tied to the waist; this basket contains glutinous rice used as refreshment during recess from work. Usually the Miao-I eat
- 264 two meals a day, with an extra noon meal during the busy agricultural season. When eating at home, they place the food on a table and sit on stools around it; but sometimes they also eat outdoors, squatting or standing under the eaves. In the kind of food they have and their manner of eating, they are
- 262 the same as the Chinese. One difference is their fondness of

[132 cont.]

443 Even today they do not have a single market fair within the area and this shows how circumscribed is the sphere of their economic activity. Their only means of livelihood is agriculture. Almost

243 all the fields are terraced according to natural topography, rising from the bottom of the slope to the top in several hundred layers. The shape of the field is long and narrow, producing rice, wheat, corn and barley. These terraced fields are not fertile

[242] and the Sheng Miao do not know how to apply fertilizer. Further-

[132] more, the temperature in the whole area is very low, and a plentiful harvest is not possible. The proverb says that "when the soil is barren, the people must be poor." Although the

511 Sheng Miao toil all year round in the hard struggle for survival, they can only eke out a bare existence. Being in direct contact with them, the writer could watch at close quarters their extremely miserable conditions, which are pitiable indeed. Because of their ignorance they do not know how to save or to improve the method of production. In case of famine they cannot escape starvation, [133] which is the most important reason for the decrease in their population.

105 In our study of the Miao culture we find it varies with different ethnic units and localities, each having its peculiar traits. The distinguishing features of the Sheng Miao, who differ a great deal from the other tribes, are as follows:

1. Ignorant and straightforward, they are easily duped. They are ready to proclaim themselves "kings" and to create disturbances.

2. The men are black in complexion, red-eyed, dishevelled, and tall and big in stature.

3. Up to this day not a single one of them can talk fluent Chinese.

4. There are peculiar styles of costumes for men and women.

5. Their staple food is glutinous rice, supplemented by raw meat, raw blood, bees, locusts, centipedes, earthworms, tree worms, sand worms, water worms, mountain rats and lizards.

6. The women are fond of smoking leaf tobacco.

[183 cont.]

796 consider this day as the birthday of the cow-king, and so all the
[231] cows in the field have a day of rest.

The Fifth Month. The fifth day of this month is the Tuan-yang festival, also known locally as "Tuan-wu." The Miao-I families in the hsien district would steam glutinous rice on the fourth day and mash it into tz'u-pa the next morning. Every
[262] member of the family would receive a few pieces and these are eaten with maple sugar and crushed bean paste in the place of meals for that day. But it is [184] not a holiday and they still work as usual in the fields. Recently many Miao-I imitate the Chinese by hanging rush and artemisia leaves at the door, and at
[262] noon time they drink realgar wine and eat glutinous rice dumplings [wrapped in bamboo leaves] and noodles instead of rice.

After the transplantation of rice-plants in the fourth and
● [243] fifth months and at the time of their flowering (called locally "yang flowers") in the seventh and eighth months, the Hua
[535] Miao and the Ch'ing Miao both have a dancing festival as festive as the New Year flower dance.

The Sixth Month. The temples of the local gods in all the Chinese and Miao-I villages in the district are scenes of great celebration on the sixth day of this month. The Miao-I build
[346] their local temples outside the village gate, and on this day they would hold processions in honor of the Earth God. The day before, the village head prepared in advance a big pig and many varieties of meats and vegetables. On the sixth day all the items of sacrifice are carried to the village gate and deposited there in front of the Earth God temple. After setting off the firecrackers, every family takes turns to perform a ritual before the temple. After the sacrifice the pork is divided up among the families, the quantity being designated by each family to be paid for in grain after the autumn harvest. The remainder of the pork together with the other meats and vegetables are cooked together on the spot in a huge cauldron and eaten by all the people present. After feasting each family brings home a small quantity of pork, from which a piece is cut off for sacrifice on the border of one's field. A string of paper money is also stuck there as a token to

[198 cont.]

535 go-between to arrange the match. Therefore, young men and
 527 women everywhere try to make as many new clothes as possible
 584 to be worn on this occasion. The dancers sometimes change
 their clothes a few times a day. In short, the custom of the
 flower dance has prevailed for a long time. Some dance with
 the hope of acquiring children while others, among the illusive
 shadows and to the tune of scintillating music, look secretly but
 intently for his or her future mate. For the unmarried men and
 women the purpose of the flower dance is to seek a partner in
 life.

535 (II) The Market Dance. The market dance is also an im-
 527 portant annual event with the Hua Miao and the Ch'ing Miao in
 443 this area. The dance is similar to the flower dance, except that
 it does not require a flower tree and that it has no fixed date
 and place. It is held generally after the transplantation of
 young rice-plants in the fourth or fifth month, or after the
 ripening of the crop in the seventh or eighth month. It is held
 [202] at the market fair, but the announcement is made at a previous
 fair by the host (or promoter, who is generally a Chinese) with
 two men, one beating a gong, and the other balancing a bamboo
 pole on his shoulder, on which is tied a belt with flower designs.
 This belt is presented as a souvenir by the girl to the boy when
 they talk love at the dance. When the two men circle around
 the fair once the crowd would know that the next one would be a
 market dance. On that occasion bands of men and women from
 all parts would come with new clothes as for the flower dance,
 men playing so-na and lu-sheng, and talking all the way. Ar-
 riving at the fair they would perch on the high mounds or stay in
 the low open ground outside the market place, playing musical
 instruments and singing songs. Young men and women take this
 opportunity to meet new friends or [199] renew old acquaintances.
 ● [243] The old people believe that the market dance in the fourth month,
 when the buckwheat and other grains flower, can encourage the
 yielding of more crops, and the market dance in the seventh
 month can bring about firmer and larger seeds. The market dance
 is known proverbially as the "grain dance," a name which clearly
 reveals its superstitious origin.

[158 cont.]

96) "Méo" villages, the hygienic conditions in them are questionable
364 enough, especially during the winter when the temperature frequently
drops [159] below freezing. The "Méo" spend the days and the
nights of winter squatting or sleeping about the kitchen hearth and
neglect to put any extra clothing on when they go outdoors. It is
164 clear that under these conditions the pulmonary maladies which
have already been spoken of are extremely frequent and that they
cause real havoc among the old people and the young children.

Smallpox frequently rages among the "Méo," but like all
primitive people who are not poisoned by the abuse of medicines
[147] for generations, they react marvelously to the simplest remedies.
In 1911, a serious epidemic of smallpox ravaged a very large vil-
lage in the region of Pha-Long, causing five or six deaths daily. All
[751] the inhabitants were vaccinated the same day, old and young, healthy
persons or those already attacked. From that moment, no further
deaths occurred.

262 Maize is the basic food of the "Méo." It is boiled, steamed,
or parched, or reduced to meal in order to be eaten in the form
[252] of cakes. The "Méo" also cultivate mountain rice, but like the
243 "Man," they are coming more and more to cultivate permanent
irrigated rice fields, the working of which is easier and more re-
munerative. To this end they have taken over as much as possible
of the favorable terrain, valley bottoms or sides of hillocks on which
water may be brought by a simple canalization, and have laid out
these areas into terraced rice fields where they often successively
[249] cultivate rice and opium. (See photos 135 and 428, Plate 43, show-
ing the rice fields after the harvest, and photo 184, Plate 41, which
shows a large rice field used for the cultivation of opium, the latter
photo taken March 31, 1912.)

262 Aside from maize and rice, the "Méo" eat buckwheat and many
vegetables, which they cook in water with a little salt: potatoes,
[252] string beans, peas, beans, cucumbers, turnips, eggplants, pumpkins,
and so on. The use of meat (fowl, game, domestic animals) is re-
served for ceremonies and banquets, which the "Méo" never miss a
chance for. They never eat horseflesh.

[159 cont.]

271 The "Méo" habitually drink water, but they make alcohol
273 from grain (distilled or fermented) which they often drink without
the slightest moderation.

276 They smoke tobacco in the bamboo water pipe or in the long
pipe [160] with the small bowl and mouthpiece of porcelain, of a
model analogous to that of the "Man" pipe.

They smoke opium in a very moderate manner. Big opium
smokers are rare among the "Méo" of Upper Tonkin.

[249] Sometimes they cultivate hashish, but never make use of it.

241 The "Méo" are, above all, farmers and they cultivate upon
311 their mountains the various grains and vegetables enumerated above.
They utilize to this end parcels of land capable of growing vegeta-
tion, even the tiniest, sides of knolis, shallow basins, clefts in the
rocks.

243 The maize is sown in the fourth month and is spread about on
all the parcels which can be cultivated, often by clumps of two or
three hills. The ground is scratched very lightly, with the plough or
with the hoe. It receives a little manure at the exact spot where
the seed will be deposited. The harvest takes place towards the
eighth month. It is not unusual to see the fields planted to maize—
249 as we have seen above for certain irrigated rice fields — transform
themselves into ground for the growing of opium, which is planted
toward the ninth month, after the earth has been mixed with a few
ashes. The opium harvest takes place the third month and the ground
[243] again is given over to the cultivation of maize or of sorghum. The
buckwheat generally produces two crops a year.

248 The "Méo" also cultivate hemp, to which they consecrate their
best areas of ground (bottoms of cirques or of valleys). The hemp
is sown the fourth month and reaped the seventh month.

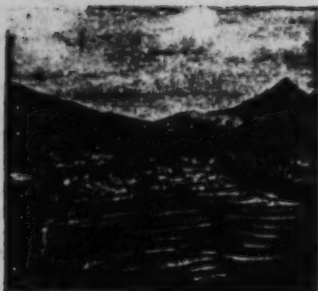
231 The "Méo" keep a few bees. They often have hives whose
honey is used in cake-making.

244 They raise their numerous vegetables either in gardens laid
out near their cabins, or in the maize fields at the same time as the
maize.

412 The agricultural implements consist of ploughs of a primitive
407 model with ploughshares of iron, and some hoes. For the harvest,
large scythes and billhooks are used.

[172]

243
361

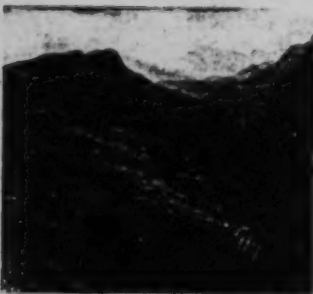


135. "Méo" Village with
Terraced Rice Fields.

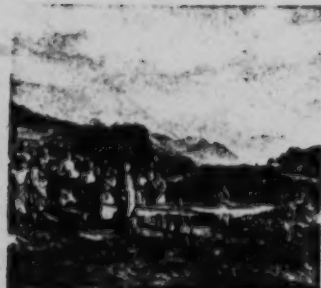


203. Pha-Long (Country of
the "Méo," "Nung," and
"Pa-y").

[283]



428. Hillsides Laid out in
Irrigated Rice Fields by the
"Méo" of Pakha.



128. "Méo" Method of Reeling
off Hemp.

241 eight ears. The stalks likewise are placed in piles in the fields, and then carried in as needed for bedding for the animals, heating, cooking food, or even building house walls.

The Meo grow little mountain rice and almost never plain's rice. The areas rarely lend themselves to the latter crop. However we have discovered, especially at Gi Chu Phin near Van Bu, magnificent mountain cirques whose slopes were decorated with terraced rice fields up to an altitude of one thousand meters.

Aside from hemp, buckwheat, and opium, other crops are planted in the furrows of the fields of maize and among the stalks of that plant. This is done in such a way that the same field may produce at the same time beans, peas, pumpkins, broad beans, cucumbers and a grain called cao lien which serves to make flour and the bread eaten on holidays.

When the maize has been harvested, a crop of buckwheat is sometimes sown in the soil.

249 Opium is sown in November, the poppy seeds being mixed
248 with ashes to protect them from insects. The incisions are made in the plant in April or May, then once all of them have given up their opium, preparations are started for a crop of maize on the same soil.

245 Hemp is grown at the lowest spot in the cirques, because it requires very deep arable soil. It is sown in April and harvested in July. Sorghum is sown and reaped at the same time as maize. Finally some peach, pear, apple, plum trees, etc., are almost always found around the cabin. Their fruit, although less well flavored than those of France, is still not to be scorned.

286 The Meo make their cloth themselves from the hemp which
412 they harvest. Some of them forge their work tools, spades, plough-
415 shares, pruning-hooks, hoes, etc., and buy crude iron which comes from Yunnan for this purpose. They make their ladles and buckets, furniture, sandals of bamboo fiber, pottery and, in short, all of their farming implements.

252 /140/ To grind maize they use a mill similar to the Coi xay
243 of the Annamese, but larger. The movable mill-stone here is activated
462 by a crank which is articulated with a system of horizontal spokes attached to a strong wooden bar. Three or four women operate this bar by drawing it towards them and away from the mill, and then by pushing it towards the mill. The picture afforded by this exercise is one of vigorous movement. The bodies of these strong daughters of the mountain bending, their return movement which shows a glowing

- 252 face, crowned with the halo of their wide turban, and a throat panting
 • 243 with the effort just accomplished, together with their ballerina skirts
 462 flapping about their bare legs-- the general effect of all this at the foot of
 a rocky cliff makes a picture to tempt the brush of a Millet.

Section 7

Way of Life--Intellectual State--

Religious Ideas--Custom Relating to Birth, Marriage,
and Death--Religious Ideas

- 181 The Meo likes his independence very much. However, he is
 177 less uncouth than the Man in his dealings with the French. It is not
 609 impossible to make a soldier of him and the creation of the small posts,
 701 linh co, of this race have been entirely successful. In 1904 about forty
 of them were incorporated into the "Tonkinese Tirailleurs" at Bao Lac,
 but this attempt gave less satisfactory results because of their antipathy
 to life in the barracks. In the future we should be satisfied with having
 them enter the police forces of the frontier.
- 871 The Meo, while somewhat crude, are not entirely without
 153 intelligence. A school was founded in March 1903 at the military
 post of Phobang, made up of young Meo and Lolo, and at the end of
 a year most of them, and especially the Lolo, already were reading
 correctly and were beginning to write little phrases in French. From
 this experiment one might at last conclude that these peoples are
 capable of a certain intellectual culture.
- 262 /141/ The Meo's method of living is of the simplest. His usual
 252 food is maize, he eats meat only on the occasion of festivities, but
 415 then he is not forbidden to eat the flesh of the dog, as are the Man. Maize
 is cooked by steaming. It is eaten at home with an abundance of
 vegetables, but for meals while traveling, or in the fields, small cakes
 are made of it. A porcelain spoon is the only instrument used in
 bringing food to the mouth.
- 276 Although the cultivation of the opium poppy is very widespread
 [249] among the Meo, he uses very little of it himself. On the other hand,
 almost all smoke tobacco, either in a water pipe, or in a pipe similar
 to our own. The tobacco prepared by them looks like French tobacco,
 but is very much stronger. Neither men nor women chew betel. Far
 301 from lacquering their teeth, they take a certain pride in having them
 55 brilliantly white and go so far as to carry their tooth-brushes hanging
 from their necklaces.

/139/

AKha A04
Miao AES

b) Music and Musical Instruments

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The basic music is the same among both peoples; both peoples know singing and the use of musical instruments.

Singing

M
[243]
[784]

Singing plays an important role among the Meau as well as among the Akha; both sexes sing on various occasions. I found no confirmation for the assertion by Dhuratsadorn that the Meau make music only in connection with burials. To be sure, the Akha enjoy singing even more than the Meau, for whom singing while working in the rice fields is prohibited by a taboo (see the chapter, "Religion and Magic," section on "Cult and Taboo"), whereas the Akha sing unhindered and by preference at just such work.

M
[854]

Among both peoples there are a few traditional songs of old whose texts are unalterable. The dance songs of the Akha girls belong to this group. The great majority of song texts, however, are improvised and depend on the situation and the singer. There are, for instance, many variations of the songs with which the mother sings her child to sleep. Hopes, wishes, and admonitions are woven into these lullabies of the Meau in which are repeated innumerable times and always to the same melody:

M
[539]

"Sleep well, my child, I shall cover you to keep you warm and go into the rice field to get fodder for our animals."

"Sleep, my girl, and do not cry, otherwise the dogs and the pigs will bite you."

"Sleep well, my boy, and do not play with knives and do not lose your covering."

"Sleep, my child, I shall go into the rice field and cut sugar cane for you and bring you good food."

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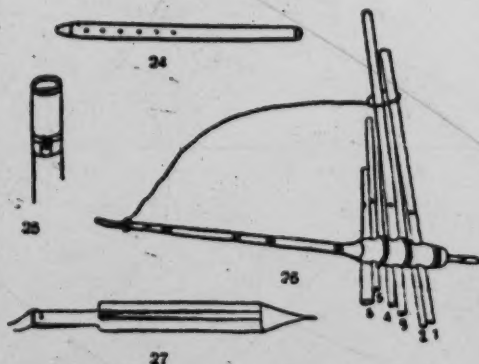
Singing is very important for lovers; it gives them a chance to express the intensity of their emotions, knowledge, mental ability, ready wit, and humor. It is significant that

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/146 cont./

534 maintains, however, that their use is restricted to men. His
 [114] statement is very true concerning the mouth organ, but he errs
 [562] with regard to the flute, since I myself repeatedly saw Meau
 [533] women and girls playing it.

The vibration flutes (Figs. 28 and 29) of various sizes, which are played either as a rod flute or transverse flute, are used more commonly than the simple rod-flute. In addition to the blow hole, each flute has five finger holes burned into the upper side, in addition to one at the side that is stopped during the blowing. Accordingly, different tones are produced. As in the case of the mouth organs, the absolute pitch of the basic tone varies with the size of the instrument.



[533] The six tones of the instrument, however, are accurately tuned in a simple minor scale. The construction of these flutes, like that of the mouth organs,

Figs. 24-27. Musical instruments of the Meau. Fig. 24, simple rod flute, 1/10 nat. size; Fig. 25, end-piece of the rod flute, with blow hole; Fig. 26, mouth organ. The wooden body is made of two symmetrical halves joined together and wound with bamboo strips. The six pipes are of bamboo, the mouthpiece of silver. About 1/11 nat. size. Fig. 27, Jew's-harp of brass or bronze, 1/3 nat. size.

is rather difficult, and there are only a few Meau who have mastered it. For example, in the area of the Meau villages

[463] on the upper course of the Nam Fa, there was only one man who was skilled in this art and his flutes were used over a wide area.

533 Jew's-harps and flutes are popularly played by the guards in the
 [243] rice fields, who while away the time with them. Otherwise their sound is most commonly heard in the evening beside the hearth fire for the edification of the people.

/168 cont. /

231 If a village is plagued by many sicknesses, the Meau erect
 776 a symbolic gate out of three crossbeams about 40 or 50 meters
 731 from the village on the path leading to their settlement. Here
 789 the dog is hanged, and it is assumed that henceforth, as a
 243 guardian spirit, it will seek to prevent evil spirits from treading
 764 the paths that lead into the village. The same procedure is
 775 followed before laying out a new rice field.

In addition the Meau practice in different ways the custom
 of killing a dog when a human being dies; as a spirit it is sup-
 posed to guide the soul of the deceased into the other world.

776 My informant explained to me that over this whole host of
 spirits there stands only one spirit to whom they all, even the
 ancestors, are subject, "as to a king." He is invisible like all
 the other spirits, but in contrast to the latter he does not have
 human form, and lives simultaneously in heaven and in the
 earth, he is omnipresent. This chief spirit or, if one prefers,
 "high god" of the Meau, is bisexual, that is, male and female
 at the same time. He is the "Father and Mother spirit" of the
 Meau, who call him nă thu pen dọ nă thu /169/ pẻ dỏ. Savina (1)

1. II. p. 243.

gives his name as Ndo Chu or Chu Lau and maintains that this
 chief spirit, according to Meau belief, created the world. I
 was unable to find any confirmation for this notion, however.

It is not his affair to determine birth and death, but he is
 turned to when especially important reasons come up, for in-
 stance, when evil spirits are to be fought, and therefore espe-
 931 cially in the case of epidemics and similar events. The animals
 825 of the forest are likewise under the jurisdiction of the high
 224 Father-Mother spirit. Therefore, the hunters must turn to him
 with their request for rich booty.

773 The Meau told me that human beings do not know who
 created the world (concerning the legends about this, see the
 chapter, "Myths and Fairy Tales"). They also do not know who
 821 makes lightning and thunder and do not have any clear concep-
 626 tion as to the origin of these natural phenomena. They pre-
 sume, however, that they are linked with the actions of the

/189 cont. /

787 The Meau ascribe extraordinary importance to various
 [756] omens, whose number is almost legion. There are many omens
 that only the shaman knows how to interpret, while a great num-
 ber is known to every Meau and he can interpret them himself
 and act accordingly. For example a field is abandoned if bad
 [241] omens appear, an /190/ accident occurs, or the crop fails,
 since one concludes from this that evil spirits are in it.

• 243 When a rice field is laid out, a person must be specially
 787 careful, and he does not by any means limit himself to the
 sacrificial festivals for the protective spirits described above,
 since the welfare of a Meau community depends upon the yield
 from the fields. The Meau live on the field products and the
 [433] booty from hunting; their dwellings and villages stand in the
 midst of forest areas. Hence it is not surprising that the behavior
 and the presence or the absence of various animals are believed
 [825] to be omens. In the search for a suitable location no muntjac may
 be seen or heard. If this obstacle is met successfully, it may
 still happen that when the first tree is felled, a turtle or a snake
 appears. In that case only swift flight can save one, for it means
 [776] that the dwelling of a spirit has been destroyed.

342 The omens which have to be heeded when a house is built
 787 are equally numerous. One may neither see a snake nor hear the
 825 "shriek" of a muntjac. Even the cry of a black squirrel is a bad
 omen. If none of these bad omens were noticed and if no bird
 dropped his excrement on the site chosen, the house and its occu-
 pants will be blessed.

224 In view of all this, it is self-evident that the Meau hunters,
 787 too, have absolute faith in the omens with which they are
 825 familiar. If one sets out to hunt and sees a snake or a muntjac,
 the undertaking is immediately called off. If one nevertheless
 wanted to proceed to hunt, he must expect to be killed by a
 wounded buffalo or elephant.

The muntjac plays an important and always unfavorable
 role. Merely its "shriek" is enough; the hunter who hears it be-
 lieves that he cannot expect to bag any game.

/204 cont./

778 The smith, for instance, erects an altar for the teacher-spirit of the
776 smiths, the shaman for the teacher-spirit of the shamans, etc.,
and thus there are many places of worship, each dedicated to a
different deity. Not all of the good or neutral spirits by any
means, however, have such altars or sacrificial places.

776 There is a single spirit to whom sacrifices may be offered
782 anywhere, irrespective of special places of worship. This is the
bisexual, high Father-Mother spirit, for he alone has the power
and the ability to be omnipresent. Nevertheless, for him, too
[996] the principal sacrifice at the New Year's festival is offered at a
sacrificial place dedicated to him.

778 These little altars seem to be very simple among the Meau
[114] in Tonkin. Lajonquière (1) gives the following description, which

1. II. p. 313.

we also find almost verbatim in Abadie (2):

2. Page 168.

"... The family altar usually consists only of sheets of red
paper with gold dots, which are pasted against one of the walls.
Or even simpler, of a small table, on which stands a small cup
made of bamboo, which is filled with sand. At certain times,

[782] one or two incense candles are lighted and placed upon it, which
is the extent of ordinary worship."

778 Among the Meau in Thailand, I also occasionally found small
782 altars erected to the good spirits in the rice fields and gardens,
243 which were supposed to protect the crops. Sacrifices are often
offered to these spirits, however, at a particular place in the
dwelling after returning from the field or before leaving for work
in the fields.

782 The New Year's festival has extraordinary cultic significance.
796 On this occasion, sacrifices are offered to all of the good and evil
[769] spirits as well as to the ancestors, in addition to all the other
prescribed and voluntary sacrifices. The festival of the New Year
lasts four /205/ days and begins on the day of the new moon in
December. Many days earlier careful preparations have been

Milo AES

/207 cont. /

782
231 sacrificial animal among the Meau in China. Whether the slaughtering of buffalo in connection with weddings and mourning mentioned in the old Chinese literature, according to Eberhard (4), was done as a sacrifice or only for provisions for

4. II, p. 252.

the guests is not revealed from the description.

782
Burnt offerings play an important role. Among them are the burning of incense candles and the burning of the fat-lamp (Fig. 51) on the altar during the sacrificial act and conjurations, at which, however, there is at the same time the practical and previously mentioned thought that the spirits, like human beings, need light in order to see. Wax candles are sometimes lighted instead of the fat-lamp. Also of significance among the Meau [778] is the burning of spirit-money and sacral paper upon which, as already described, blood of the sacrificial animals is dripped. Before slaughtering an animal, the animal is purchased from the spirits by burning under its snout spirit-money of the value of the animal (Ill. 103).¹ Gold paper, which the Meau do not make themselves, but buy from the Lao, is also sacrificed to the high Father-Mother spirit. Since it is difficult to burn, it is folded into small cones before being set afire. Such a tiny [439] shako of gold paper has the spirit-value of 25 silver pieces. [435]

/208/ Any other kind of sacrifice to the ancestors and good spirits is unknown. When sacrifices are made to evil spirits, however, an uneven number of offerings are scattered in all four directions and the evil spirits are requested not to torment people; they are giving them what they have, but they are poor.

● 243
782 As soon as the first rice has been cut, a small sacrificial hut is erected on the rice field, and a sacrifice, which consists of a thousand ticals in spirit-money, salt, alcohol, and some rice, is offered to the good spirit that dwells in the rice field. All this is placed in the small hut for the spirit.

¹[see cat 116, p 704- ANALYST]

/282/ . . . /

5. Rice-field Huts

243 The rice-field huts (Figs. 87 and 88) are occupied only
342 during the period of field cultivation and the harvest by those
members of the family /Figs. 87-88 appear here/ /283/ to
whom these tasks are assigned. The huts lie on the steep slope
in the midst of the fields and, despite their simplicity, have all

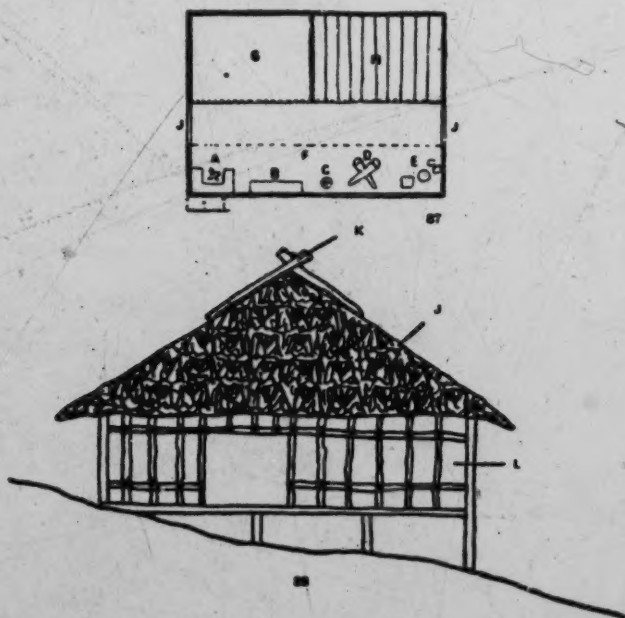


Fig. 87 (above). Rice-field hut of the Meau, ground plan.

Key to symbols:

A = small fireplace for cooking
B = hanging shelf for cooking
utensils
C = large gourd-bottle
D = large fireplace for heating
E = rice baskets, harvesting
baskets, gourd bottles, knives,
bamboo vessels with supplies of
fat and the like

F = over F, storage loft for
harvest products
G = elevated platform on
which, at harvest time, the
sheaves of rice lie piled high
H = elevated platform cov-
ered with mats, as bedroom.

(cont.)

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/283 cont./

Fig. 88 (below). Rice-field hut of the Meau, sketch.

Key to symbols:

J = roof truss of bamboo, leaves
of the fan palm as cover-
ing

K = roof rider of wood

L = walls of beaten tree-
bark or split bamboo,
fastened together by means
of crossbeams.

/text continued/

the necessary comforts. Since they are often occupied for several weeks, the necessary household furnishings are likewise not lacking in them. Besides the agricultural implements, one sees crossbows, guns, quivers with arrows, powder horns, traps, and the like stored along the walls. Outside the hut one also often finds small windcreens made of palm leaves or rice straw (Ill. 104), which serve as additional sleeping places, as well as open granaries for the rice straw, large mats on which the grain is threshed, and a rice pounder. Chicken baskets lie stacked up, for at harvest time the fowl are brought from the village to pick up the scattered kernels, for the Meau take great pains to see to it that no kernel goes to waste.

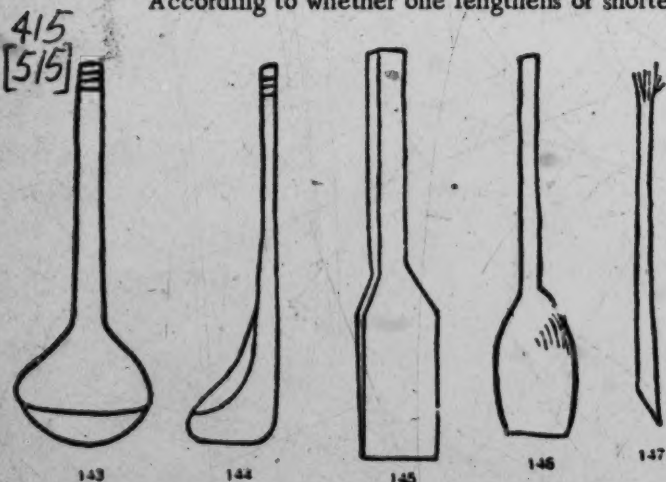
Since the field work is primarily a duty for the growing youth, and they, removed from the authority of the village community, feel freer and more undisturbed, a gayer life always prevails up in the rice-field huts, and the work is amply interrupted by laughter and jesting. Even beyond the periods of field work, when the huts stand unused, they are happily sought out by young people as love nests. Up here they are disturbed by no one, and the quiet nights on the lonely mountain tops undoubtedly do not lack strong romanticism, as is shown by love songs which have the little rice-field huts as their scene of action.

The Akha, too, are seminomads who move their residence when the cultivable soil around the old village is exhausted. What has been said about the migrations of the Meau at the beginning of this chapter also applies to them. The decision to move the village, however, is made among the Akha by the

/306 cont. /

412 The household and kitchen implements of the
252 Meau are very numerous. As was mentioned, all
[243] the grain and leguminous products are husked in the
[244] foot-operated mortar built into the cooking area (Fig.
139). /Figs. 140-142 appear here. /

256 /307/ For grinding the kernels of grain and maize the
large mill shown in Ill. 94¹ and Fig. 140 is used. The
lower-millstone half (Fig. 141) is immovable and is
provided with an axle (A), which is fitted into the
opening (S) of the upper stone (Fig. 142). Both mill-
stone halves are provided with grooves (R), which run
in various directions. The upper eccentric millstone
(Fig. 142) is connected with a horizontal pole. When
this is swung forward and backward, the movable-
millstone half turns. In this, on the top, a hole (O)
is chiseled out, through which the grain is poured in.
According to whether one lengthens or shortens the



Figs. 143-146. Dippers and Ladles of the Meau.

Fig. 143. Bamboo dipper. Fig. 144. Side
view of the same, 1/5 nat. size. Figs. 145
and 146. Wooden stirring ladles, 1/10 nat.
size. Fig. 147. Toothpick, 1/3 nat. size.

1 [see cat 116, p644 - ANALYST]

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/353 cont. /

A
226 The Akha, too, do not know these fishing methods and are not even familiar with fish poison. Moreover, the Akha are not nearly as passionate about it, but they are likewise good fishermen. Like the Meau, they fish with their hands, with lines, simple hooks and small hand-nets which resemble the fish nets of the Meau. The net, however, is attached to a perforated wooden hoop (chapter, "Handicrafts," Fig. 406); the meshes of the net are like those of the carrying bags.

A
[227]

d) Agriculture

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[171] Whereas gathering, hunting, and fishing play almost only the role of expanding the food base, agriculture is the actual economic basis of all the mountain peoples of Farther India.

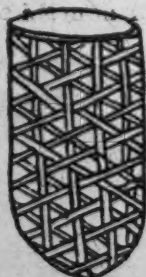


Fig. 266

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407 Weir-basket of the Meau, about 1/20 nat. size.

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[285] now settled in Thailand. For instance, I found in northern Thailand a few old Meau who were still familiar with the use of the plow. In answer to my question as to why the use of this implement had been given up, an old chief replied: "This land, and even more the country that we had to pass through to reach our present dwelling sites, is mountainous, stony, and does not permit the use of the plow. In our old homeland, too, there were such regions in which one could not use a plow. In

The Meau in Thailand, strangely enough, do not arrange their rice fields in terraces, though their neighbors, the Chinese, are famous masters at it, and this agricultural method makes possible the cultivation of wet rice. Thus, on the steep slopes which, without terraces, also do not permit the use of the plow, only hoe culture remains. There are still living witnesses to the fact that in former times, and to be sure not too long ago, the situation was different in the more northerly habitation sites of the Meau

MIGDAE5

/353 cont. /

178 time the old men die, the young people no longer know the
 243 use of the plow, and so the custom begins to sink into oblivion.
 407 even where it could still be used today."

In any case the described tradition of the Meau in Thailand indicates that the plow and its field economy were not subsequently seen and copied from the Chinese or Annamese by the Meau passing through. /354/ but rather had been used in former times. This is also confirmed by the reports of various authors who visited the Meau in Indochina and in their other areas of settlement. The conditions there are different from those in Thailand, and the intensive agriculture of the Meau there forms the economic basis for a much higher standard of living than the members of the same people could have in

[184] Thailand. The Meau in Indochina have in large part retained not only the use of the plow, but in many instances they have also succeeded in going over to the cultivation of wet rice and even to terraced fields, which presuppose the use of the plow.

243 Abadie (1), for instance, writes: "The Meau also cultivate
 [178]

1. Page 159.

mountain rice; but, like the Man, in increasingly greater proportions they are practicing wet-rice cultivation, which is easier and more productive." The author also shows illustrations of such large-scale fields with wet rice (Illustrations 135 and 428 on Plate 41 of his work) and then continues (p. 151): "The Meau who cultivate irrigated rice fields engage in this work along the high mountain valleys. Though the absolute altitude of these rice fields is relatively high,

[361] the Meau do not live near them. The minute the daily work is finished, they again ascend to their villages, which always lie near the summits of the mountains."

/354 cont. /

- 178 Lajonquière (2), too, has devoted attention to the culti-
 ● 243

2. II, p. 309.

vation of this field product among the Meau: "Wherever the Meau were able to adopt wet-rice fields, they have preferred to devote themselves to this work."

- 241 When the Meau in Thailand has found a suitable site in
 [596] the forest for laying out fields, he goes there at the beginning
 [782] of the dry season with the members of his large /extended/
 family, sacrifices spirit-money, and requests first the ancestors
 and then the high Father-Mother spirit to help him and to protect
 him and his family against falling trees. Then all possible
 [787] omens are carefully noted. If no bad omens are discovered and
 none appear during the clearing that is now begun, the work is
 diligently continued. First the brush and the small trees,
 later the larger ones, are cut. Giant trunks, however, which
 offer /355/ too much resistance to the axes of the natives, are
 only hacked circularly, and the brush is piled up high around
 [314] them. If resinous pine is encountered during this work, it is
 left standing, but tapped so that the resin flowing out, which
 is a desirable product, will collect in the hollows of the tree.
 About a month later, when the cut underbrush and wood are
 thoroughly dry, the field is burned off and cleared of the
 half-burned wood; the latter is now piled around the trunks of
 the still unconquered primeval-forest giants, and everything
 is set afire again. Thus, even the mightiest trunks are finally
 [243] destroyed and only slightly hinder the growing seed of the
 mountain rice in its development under their crowns now
 stripped of foliage.

- 243 During the time between the burning and the first rains,
 which are awaited for the cultivation so that the forest soil
 will be sufficiently softened to receive the seed, the Meau
 [343] erect a small workhouse which is never lacking (III. 104).¹
 [417] On the other hand, no fence is built around the field, unless
 [423] it borders on the field of another. In that case a fence of
 crude wooden sticks is erected on the boundary line. After
 [see cat 116, p705-ANALYST]

/355 cont. /

- 243 the first two or three violent thundershowers, the seeding is begun. If the large /extended/ family has many members, the freshly cleared land, which may have large dimensions, is subdivided many times into fields of half a hectare to three hectares, each planted with one certain kind of seed. If, however, it is a matter of a family with fewer members, all the seeds are mixed together, and the mixture is sowed for higgledy-piggledy growth.

224 As soon as a field is laid out and the seed is sown, a
243 great number of game and bird traps are set up everywhere. Particularly popular is a kind of self-firing trap for wild pigs and deer, for which a crossbow with poisoned arrows is used. To be sure, they make entering the field very dangerous for anybody who is not familiar with the locality. Moreover, instead of fences which would keep off wild animals, traps are set on compulsory game-trails, in which all game from the pheasant to the wild pig is caught or falls victim to baited snaring devices. The animals caught represent an important contribution to the diet of the Meau, and this is the reason why the fields are not protected by fences from intrusion and possible devastation by animals. Where no traps can be set or if /356/ whole herds of game visit the fields, the young men lie in ambush and in the moonlight capture a rich booty with their poisoned arrows.

[262]

243
[184]

Savina (1).describes the arrangement of the rice fields

1. II. p. 216.

among the Meau in Indochina somewhat differently: "In the first month, when the New Year's festivals are over, the Meau put their fields in order. If the fields are far away, they stay there for eight to ten days. The men fell the trees with axes, and the women and children cut the grass with knives. In the second month the fields are set afire. Then maize is sowed. When the maize is in bloom, nights are spent in the fields in order to drive off the bears and the monkeys. When the maize

[251]

is harvested, it is brought to the house. The seed ears are

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/356 cont. /

243
[25] stored on the platform over the hearth. In the second month the Meau put rice seed in water in their houses. After eight to ten days, when the rice germinates, it is taken to small rice fields. In the third month the large rice fields are laid out. The men make dams for the water. In the fourth month, the rice plants are transplanted to these large fields; in the sixth month the rice blooms, and in the ninth month it is harvested. It is threshed at night."

241 If the Meau lay out separate fields, the following plants, which I enumerate in the sequence of their periods of cultivation, are planted and sowed: sugar cane, yams, rice, and at the same time cucumbers, radishes, and beans, and finally maize, poppies, leafy vegetables, tobacco, and onions. Furthermore, sesame, buckwheat, and sorghum are cultivated.

251 After the harvest, all the field produce is conveyed by the Meau to their village and put in the dwelling. Special storage houses are set up only if the harvest was very rich. The store of seed is carefully cleaned and piled up on a shelf over the fireplace so that the smoke will keep off insects and harmful germs.

241
[243]
[249] Depending on the fertility of the soil, rice fields bear from one to three years. There are poppy fields, however, such as I myself came across, that still produced a satisfactory yield even after twenty years of utilization. If a field becomes exhausted, it is allowed to lie fallow until the forest trees that subsequently grow have suppressed the weeds.

/357/ The reason for abandoning a field is generally the exhaustion of the unfertilized soil. The growth of weeds, however, a reason for abandoning fields which is cited by other authors, plays only a minor role among the Meau in Thailand. It is considerably less tiresome to clean the weeds out of a field than to clear tall virgin forest with primitive tools. All the plants mentioned are cultivated in accordance with established agricultural customs.

/357 cont./

- 243
[262] 1. Rice. It is by far the most important cultivated plant of the Meau in Thailand and actually represents the basis of their diet. Seven different kinds are planted, four of which are glutinous rice and three are so-called white (Chinese) rice. The individual kinds are distinguished by the time until they ripen and also by the size of the grains and ears. All seven kinds belong among the types classified under the concept of mountain rice, which are not cultivated in Europe at all. They grow, independent of artificial irrigation, on cleared slopes. Classified as glutinous rice are the kinds that, when cooked, form a sticky, gelatinous substance, which does not appeal very much to the taste of Europeans. The "white rice," on the other hand, consists of types similar to those available commercially among us in Europe. The Meau have presumably [177] received these different kinds of rice from the Chinese.

The Meau in Thailand begin to plant rice between the end of May and the beginning of June, with the harvest, depending on the type, three to five months later. At the beginning of the rainy season, after the appropriate ceremonies have been performed (see the chapter, "Religion and Magic," the section, "Cult and Taboo"), cultivation begins. With the digging stick (Fig. 267), one person punches holes in the ground about five centimeters deep and 50 centimeters apart. He is followed by a second one, who lets eight to ten grains of rice fall into each hole, which, however, are not covered with earth, but rather the rain is supposed to do this. The Meau maintain that otherwise the rice would not get sufficient water for their first development.

At the harvest, the rice is cut individually, high on the stalk (Ill. 92)¹ with a special crescent-shaped knife (Fig. 268), put in bundles, and left lying in this fashion in the fields until it is dry. Then it is gathered together in the field hut and, in part, hulled right in the field /358/ in a special mortar which is operated with a suitable lever (Ill. 96).² This rice, as well as the bundles of ears, is then carried into the village (Ill. 93).³ The rice straw remains standing in the field, rots, and thus forms a fraction of the fertilization so necessary to the soil.

¹ [see cat 116, p 642. ANALYST]

² [" " " p 645 -]

³ [" " " p 643 -]

/359 cont. /

244 On the average, these yam fields are productive equally as long as the rice fields.

5. Cucumbers. Two types of them are sowed at the same time as the rice. As a rule, the procedure is simply to mix the rice seed with the cucumber seeds so that it is put in the little seed-holes with them. Cucumbers are important for the Meau because they can be harvested as early as two or at most three months after sowing, hence at a time when the Meau have the least amount of food on hand, since the old harvest has been used up by then, but the new products are not yet ripe. In accordance with their cultivation together with the rice, cucumbers are cultivated in one field only as long as it is productive for rice cultivation.

[243] 6. Radishes of only a single type are known and customarily cultivated among the Meau. Radish seeds, too, are mixed with the rice and hence cultivated simultaneously with it. Usually [262] they are eaten raw by the workers in the fields.

7. Beans. Four kinds of beans are planted at the same time as the rice but in special fields. For this a small hole is punched with the digging stick, two seed beans are put into it, and the planting hole is closed by a step with the heel as one walks on. Bean fields, which remain productive for two years, receive no further care; bean poles are unknown.

243 8. Maize, which is the principal food crop of the Meau in [184] Tonkin, on which Lajonquière (1) reports, is in only eighth

1. II. p. 309.

[244] place in northern Thailand. It is cultivated in three types and in general together with gourds in special fields. At the end of April at the earliest and the beginning of June at the latest, small holes are punched with the digging stick at intervals of half a meter. In them, besides three or four kernels of maize, two or three gourd seeds are always slipped in, and the hole is closed. For the earliest types of maize [244] the harvest begins as early as three months after sowing, which makes maize just as important as the likewise early ripening

/359 cont. /

- 243 cucumbers in /360/ helping to bridge the most difficult periods in the nutrition of the Meau. For maize, rotation of the fields must take place after each year; as a rule, maize is followed in the next year by poppies of various types.

244 9. Leafy Vegetables. This is a matter of spinach-like plants of many kinds which are cultivated at the same time as the poppies. Their special importance for the Meau lies in their early initial harvest. It can begin as early as two weeks after sowing, whereas the principal harvest does not come to its final conclusion until months later, at the same time as that of the poppies.

249 10. Tobacco in two types is sowed, in the same way as the green vegetables, together with the poppies. The tobacco is harvested five months after cultivation.

244 11. Onions of two types, one white and one red, are known to the Meau. They are set in the poppy fields when the fine seed of the latter has already sprouted.

12. Sesame, from the seeds of which oil is obtained, is set out only after the cultivation of the rice and is harvested four months later. The sesame fields remain productive equally as long as the rice fields and finally lie fallow equally as long.

243 13. Buckwheat, to be sure, is likewise important for the Meau in Thailand, but it does not by far have the significance that Savina (1) gives it by putting it directly after rice and

1. II, p. 216.

maize. It stands out in that area even more impressively according to Lajonquière (2), who even speaks of two buckwheat

2. II, p. 310.

harvests a year, the first of which takes place in the fourth month, the second in the twelfth.

/360 cont. /

- 243 14. Sorghum, negro corn, is of minor importance for Thailand, to be sure, but must be mentioned here for the sake of completeness. Sowing and harvesting take place at the same time as that of maize, which corresponds with the observations made by Savina (1) /see footnote 1 above/ in Tonkin.

244 In general the customs of the Meau here and there seem to correspond with regard to agriculture. Lajonquière (2) [184] /see footnote 2 above/ also mentions a number of kinds and varieties of vegetables, such as beans, peas, gourds, broad [243] beans, cucumbers, and in addition a kind of grass, called [252] "caolien," out of which the Meau there bake cakes. These field products, classified by the author under the name of "secondary cultures," /361/ are planted, according to his description, between the furrows of the maize fields and ripen at the same time as the latter.

351 Vegetables, aside from the large-scale cultivation in the fields, are also cultivated in gardens for daily use by the 241 Meau in Thailand. Lajonquière (1) noticed special house-

[244]

1. II, p. 310.

gardens in Indochina: "In the gardens, which they arrange around the houses, the Meau harvest radishes, eggplant, [249] beans, peas, and also tobacco in sufficient quantities for their personal needs."

[184] The Meau in Thailand, to be sure, do not plant eggplant, but in the vicinity of their houses they cultivate in particular [245] bananas and fruit trees, such as lemon, lime, and in rare cases orange trees. According to the statements of the author just cited (2) "the houses of the Meau in Indochina, on the

2. Page 309.

other hand, are surrounded by a circle of fruit trees which [114] are not fenced off on the outside." The multiplicity of the kinds of fruit there is clearly expressed in a description by

Miao AES

/361 cont. /

351 Savina (3): "There are as yet no fruit trees, but that is still

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3. II. p. 185.

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114

to come, and, to be sure, next. In the next fruit season one goes to the neighboring villages, stuffs himself with pears, plums, apples, and apricots, 'remembers his mother, sister, and little ones,' and returns home with a full carrying-basket. The pits of these fruits are thrown into the thicket and germinate there. In a few years, fruit trees come up. This is the origin of the fruit trees that are seen around all Meau villages. Not a single one has been planted."

The author's statement that the fruit trees are not planted, but rather owe their existence to the pits haphazardly and thoughtlessly thrown away, cannot be upheld by anyone who -- as I did -- has seen how carefully the Meau select, plant, and tend their fruit trees.

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I report on plants used in spinning and dyeing in the chapter, "Handicrafts."

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The agricultural equipment of the Meau in Thailand will probably be best explained by the drawings. The small crescent-shaped rice-knife (Fig. 268) is typical for the Meau. It is wound around the four fingers of the right hand by means of a string fastened to it, the stalk is seized with the thumb and the third finger, /362/ the cutting edge of the knife is pressed against the stalk with the ring finger and the little finger and cuts it (Ill. 95). These knives vary in size, depending on whether they are intended for children or adults.

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Other cutting instruments are: sickle (Fig. 271), chopping knife (Fig. 272), and the knife for harvesting poppies (chapter, "Stimulants," Fig. 289). Furthermore, the Meau have at their disposal the ax (Fig. 273), digging stick (Fig. 267), hoe (Figs. 269 and 270), weeding rake (Figs. 274 and 275). The plow, on the other hand, as was described, is not in use among the Meau in Thailand and has already fallen into oblivion, whereas it is still in use among the Meau in Tonkin, in accordance with its geographical feasibility. Abadie (1)

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184

/373 cont. /

252 Meat is either roasted over a fire or boiled in water in
[251] large or small pieces, and is also smoked without salt or
salted and dried in the sun. Furthermore it may be fried in
fat or oil. Cooking pits, as well as the use of hot stones for
cooking, are unknown.

262 As fat, lard is used primarily, but also the fat from hunt-
[252] ing booty. It is added to the meat and to the vegetables dur-
ing the cooking, but relatively little is taken for that.

The main emphasis in the daily diet, however, is not on
meat, but rather on vegetable dishes, an observation that
Lajonquière (1) also makes: "Meat and poultry are not part of

1. II. p. 302.

the daily diet, which is composed almost exclusively of maize,
vegetables, and beans. It is used, however, on festive
occasions." Abadie (2) reports similarly.

2. Page 159.

• 243 Today rice stands in first place among the Meau. It is
first threshed with a wooden cudgel, and then the chaff is
separated from the kernels by throwing the grain to be threshed
from large flat baskets (chapter, "Handicrafts," Fig. 343) into
the air when there is as much side-wind as possible so that the
chaff is carried away by it while the rice kernels fall back into
the flat baskets. Finally the clinging leaves covering them are
removed in a rice mortar, and the grain is ground in a mill
which makes it possible to grind the rice into a coarser or finer
flour as desired (chapter, "House Furnishings," Figs. 140-142).

262 The importance of rice as the principal foodstuff is shown
by the many dishes prepared from it, a few of which will be
described in the following. If the rice is to be prepared without
252 any additional ingredients, it is first cooked for several minutes
in plenty of water and then everything is poured on a plaited
strainer under which a gourd bowl is placed to catch the starchy
[237] rice-water, which is drunk or fed to the animals. The rice
[272]

/399 cont. /

285 Fig. 333 = back-basket, most common shape, various
482 kinds of plaiting, with leather straps, wide plaited bands, or
twisted strings as carrying straps. Type of plaiting, Fig. 334:
every cross-strip consists of three overlapping bamboo strips
one centimeter wide. A narrow strip is interwoven vertically.
Type of plaiting, Fig. 335: between /Figs. 333-337 appear
here/ every cross-strip two centimeters wide there is an equally
wide space. Very narrow vertical strips of split rattan, only four
millimeters wide.

Fig. 336 = a very common, strong form of the carrying
baskets, which are also used as harvest baskets. Vertical strips
of cane three centimeters wide are attached over a tight inner
wall plaited with bamboo strips four millimeters wide (Figs.
336 and 337) by means of some crosscords. Carrying straps of
strips of hide (Ill. 93). $\frac{1}{A}$

285 /400/ Figs. 338 and 339: chicken baskets, loosely
[231] plaited with narrow bamboo strips. Cover and door tied on.

Fig. 340 = flat basket, used as a strainer.

Outer edge (Fig. 341) of tight plaiting of bamboo strips
three millimeters wide, plaited loosely within (Fig. 342) with
the same material. /Figs. 338-342 appear here. /

• [243] Fig. 343 = large, flat rice-basket for separating the
grain from the chaff. Hulled rice is shaken in it and the chaff
blown away. Inner plaiting (Fig. 344) like the plaiting pattern
of mats, except for wider bamboo strips about 13 millimeters
wide.

[415] Fig. 345 = large supply-basket. Plaiting (Fig. 346) of
bamboo strips three centimeters wide. Loosely plaited, vertical
walls. There is every size of such baskets. /Figs. 343-346 ap-
pear here. /

To be mentioned here also are the hanging baskets for
the storing of dishes, as is described under Fig. 131 in the
chapter, "House Furnishings, Household and Kitchen Utensils."

285



[231] Figs. 338-339. Meau Baskets for Carrying Chickens, $1/22$ nat. size.

[415] Figs. 340-342. Plaited Strainer of the Meau, about $1/20$ nat. size.

Fig. 341. outer plaiting, and Fig. 342, inner plaiting.



• [243] Figs. 343-344. Flat Rice-basket of the Meau, about $1/12$ nat. size.
Fig. 344. Pattern of the interior plaiting.

[415] Figs. 345-346. Supply Basket of the Meau, $1/133$ nat. size.
Fig. 346. Sample of plaiting.

/400 cont. /

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The mats of the Meau are plaited with rattan strips one to one and a half centimeters wide and always display the same plaiting pattern (Fig. 329). The type of plaiting is very tight and the edges are carefully finished, so /401/ that these mats show great durability. They are almost square and on the average 1.60X1.50 meters in size. They are used as an underlayer for sleeping and to spread the ears of rice on during the threshing, as well as for drying the threshed grain.

[513]

[243]

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[413]

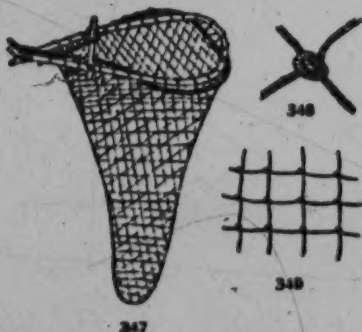
The Meau also produce nets, which are either knotted or crocheted, but not knitted (Figs. 347, 348, and 349). The crochet needle is of wood and consists of a small hook with an attached handle about 20 centimeters long. It is called kūh.

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[592]

Abadie also mentions the skill of the Meau in the production of plaited work: "Every Meau is more or less a plaiter, and the entire household makes carrying baskets of rattan fiber or bamboo. Every member of the family owns a piece in the size appropriate to his strength."

283



Furthermore the Meau make all the ropes, from the thinnest strings to thick ropes and hide ropes. To make thin strings three fibers of rattan or of the bast /Figs. 347-349 appear here/ of certain trees are twisted on the

[227]

[286]

Figs. 347-349. Handnet of the Meau for Fishing, about 1/20 nat. size.

The knotted net is tied to a stick bent in the shape of a circle. Fig. 348, knots; Fig. 349, net meshes; 1/2 nat. size.

upper or lower leg (Ill. 64). ¹/₂ Greater degrees of strength are obtained by adding three fibers each time, so that a thicker

¹/₂ See cat 116, p470- ANALYST]

39: Bernatzik--642 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 AOI Thailand

Miao AE5

/Opposite p. 474/

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243



III. 92. Each stalk of the mountain rice is cut separately by the Meau, with the help of the harvesting knife, about 30 centimeters below the ear.

Ill. 93. Meau family bringing in the harvest.

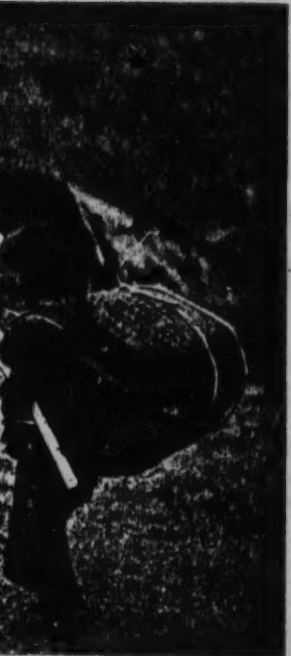


39: Bernatizik--643 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 AOI Thailand

Miao AES

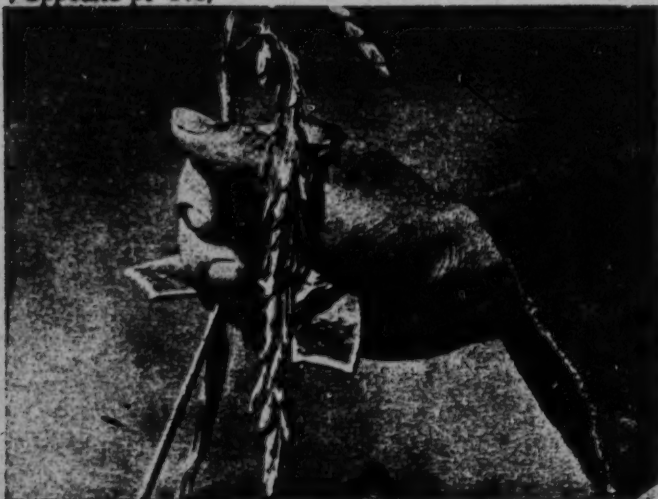
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/Opposite p. 475/



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Ill. 95. Rice harvesting knife of the Meau with crescent-shaped wooden handle and inserted metal blade.



243

Ill. 96. Device for hulling rice on a rice field of the Meau.

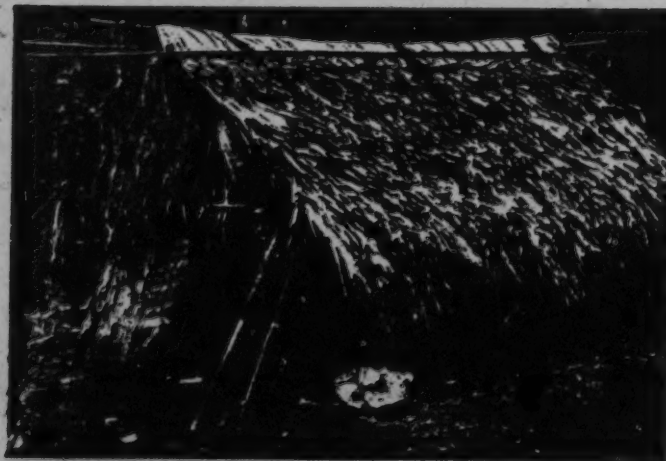
/Between pp. 522 and 523/

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III. 104. Work hut on a Meau rice-field.

342



III. 105. Simple dwelling of the Meau with walls and doors of halved bamboo.